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NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



January 2016

Rail Crossing Safety Improvements Made in Downtown Kings Mountain

In its latest safety measure, NCDOT's Rail Division has placed bollards strategically at two at-grade crossings as a means to keep tractor trailer traffic flowing safely away from downtown Kings Mountain, a city with a long history of downtown car/train crashes on municipal at-grade crossings. These new traffic calming devices move the traffic flow away from downtown at-grade crossings to the bridge at King Street.

The Rail Division is using the bollards and median planters with 16"x16" decorative tiles and live plants at the downtown crossings at Gold and Mountain streets. A combination of the devices narrows the travel lanes and decreases the turning radius needed for tractor trailers to access the at-grade crossings.

All of the crossings with a high incidence of accidents were humped and most had poor sight distance at Gold, Mountain, Oak and Hawthorne streets.

Those four crossings had a total of 33 crashes including one fatality since 1976. The Hawthorne and Oak crossings were closed in 2004 and 2012, respectively.

NCDOT has been working with the City of Kings Mountain and Norfolk Southern Railway since the 1990s on various projects involving several grade crossing safety improvements.

The line has two Amtrak trains and 19 freight trains daily traveling at a maximum of 60 miles an hour.

The project was funded by the Freight Rail & Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Fund.



NCDOT Selects Gulf & Ohio Railways to Operate Global Trans Park Rail Line

After a competitive solicitation for proposals to market and operate the state-owned Global Trans Park (GTP) railroad line in Lenoir County, the N.C. Department of Transportation has selected the Gulf & Ohio Railways, Inc. The NCDOT Board of Transportation approved the new GTP Lease & Operating Agreement at its Nov. 5, 2015 meeting. Under the terms of the agreement, G&O will operate, maintain and market freight service on the GTP line.



Located just west of Kinston, the rail line connects to the North Carolina Railroad on its south end and extends 5.7 miles north to the GTP. The railroad is strategically located to provide service to the GTP, the Morehead City State Port and eastern North Carolina. NCDOT and G&O believe the GTP line has significant business development opportunities. "We are excited about having an operator serving the GTP rail spur," said NCDOT Rail Director Paul Worley. "This will give us an advantage as we look to support economic development and job creation at the GTP and along the rail line."

NCDOT owns the GTP rail corridor, which was built in 2011. NCDOT and G&O will work closely with the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners and the Lenoir County Economic Development Commission to build a customer base along the rail line.

"We look forward to exploring the opportunities that we see this rail line offering," said Peter V. Claussen, President of G&O. "It is truly a unique piece of property and presents a lot of growth potential."

Headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee, G&O is a short-line railroad holding company. The company currently operates four other short-line railroads in the U.S., including two in North Carolina. All of its short-line railroads provide freight service. G&O has approximately 90 employees and is managed by a senior team that has extensive experience in the industry.

Johnston County Schools and NCDOT BeRailSafe Partner on Rail Safety Initiative

Following the deaths of two Smithfield-Selma Senior High School students on railroad tracks in Jan. 2015, NCDOT Rail Division's BeRailSafe program reached out to the Johnston County Schools (JCS) to develop a rail safety education program for its students. Johnston County has two busy railroad corridors used day and night by Amtrak, Norfolk Southern Railway and CSX Transportation, and many schools are located where students cross railroad tracks on their way to and from school.

The resulting program was developed by BeRailSafe with considerable advice and assistance from JCS Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Dr. Oliver Johnson and Tracey Peedin Jones, a public information officer with the school system. Implemented in October 2015, the program consists of PowerPoint presentations and a series of questions for teachers to use during ten-minute discussion sessions each day for one entire week. Different age-appropriate messages were tailored towards elementary, middle and high school classes.

Included in the high school message was the warning to not have senior yearbook pictures made on railroad tracks. Consequently, yearbook counselors in all high schools have been instructed to reject any such pictures along with all other illegal activities they routinely refuse for publication. Teen drivers were also made aware

of the importance of obeying signs, bells and flashing lights at grade crossings.

NCDOT and JCS are encouraged by student and family participation in the program and believe it will result in a greater awareness of the danger and illegality of walking on or along railroad tracks.

"Our successful partnership with NCDOT's BeRailSafe has educated Johnston County School students to be more careful and respect the railroad environment. In addition our rail safety education is a message to other school districts that rail safety cannot be taken for granted," said Dr. Johnson.



Rail Division Employees Honored for Service

At the annual Rail Division Thanksgiving lunch, Excellence in Service awards were presented to several employees in recognition of milestones in their public service career. "I greatly appreciate these employees and the entire Rail Division team," said Rail Director Paul Worley. "The things that get done are because of the work they do, and the thought and the passion they put into their jobs."

Chief Deputy Secretary Walt Gray and Deputy Secretary for Transit Keith Weatherly also attended the lunch and thanked employees for a job well done in 2015.



Left to right: Jahmal Pullen (10 years), Timothy Abbott (5 years), Jason Orthner (15 years), Charles Tew (25 years), Nancy Horne (15 years), Greg Keel (20 years), Kyle Anderson (2 years), Andrew Thomas (20 years), Kenneth Turrentine (15 years), Chief Deputy Secretary Walt Gray, Meredith McLamb (15 years), Deputy Secretary Keith Weatherly, Sandra Stepney (20 years), George Young (35 years) and Rail Director Paul Worley. Not pictured: Eric Swanson (5 years) and Teshena DeBrew (15 years), who has taken a job at NC A&T.



*Rail Director Paul Worley, Deputy Director Allan Paul, Facilities and Properties Manager Cliff Isaac and Corridor and Property Engineer Bill McQueen received a thank you plaque from the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation for assistance with accommodations made to support the **Mount Holly Greenway Construction**.*

Blended Aftertreatment System achieves 90% NOx reduction on 20-year-old passenger locomotive



Rail Propulsion Systems (RPS) of Fullerton, CA has developed a Blended Aftertreatment System (BATS) in conjunction with NCDOT and McDowell Engineers & Associates. The goal of the system is to reduce engine emissions to meet

the EPA's Tier 4 requirements for the rail industry. The aftertreatment system has resulted in an impressive 90 percent reduction in oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and a 40-70 percent reduction of other emissions components in static testing. "The static emissions tests that were performed in California on the North Carolina F59PH locomotive last week produced very promising results," said Allan Paul, Rail Division Deputy Director. The RPS after treatment system will be installed on NCDOT F59PH locomotive 1859 in December and begin over-the-road testing of the system with North Carolina State University's Environmental Engineering Department in January. The system is a straightforward installation onto the locomotive and has no effect on its mechanical function or operation other than emissions reductions. NCSU will use its PEMS emissions measurement system developed in partnership with NCDOT to record emissions data over several weeks of regular Piedmont passenger service between Raleigh and Charlotte.



Rail Division Retirements

David Hinnant, Surfaces and Encroachments Manager, retired on Sept. 30th after 31 years of service to the NCDOT.



David began his career with the Division 1 Right of Way Office in Ahsokie in 1984 and moved to the Raleigh office in 1988. In 1993, David became the State Railroad Agent, securing all agreements necessary for at-grade and parallel conflicts

with railroads operating in our state on projects affecting our State Maintained Highway System, and coordinated a variety of other responsibilities with railroads involving the NCDOT. He moved to the Rail Division in 2008, where he served as State Railroad Agent and later as Surface Encroachment Manager. David has been a vital part of the Rail Division and has developed invaluable trust and relationships with the railroads within North Carolina.

Steve Head, Corridor & Property Manager, retired on Nov. 1st after 17 years of inspiring and dedicated service with the NCDOT Rail Division.

He initially served one year as a planner under Mark Sullivan and then 16 years as the Division's Corridor and Property Manager. Steve worked hard to develop new revenue streams from encroachment agreements and property leases, which lessened his program's dependence on state funds. Two of his biggest accomplishments in 2015 were the award of long term leases for the Division's Piedmont & Northern rail line to Iowa Pacific Holdings, and the Global Trans Park rail line to the Gulf & Ohio RR. Steve has touched the lives of many individuals during his career with the Rail Division. We wish him all the best in retirement.



Zakhary Mallett, BART board member, looks on as Paul Worley addresses Smart Rail USA in Charlotte. Paul was a keynote speaker and panel discussion member at the October conference, which drew in nearly 400 attendees from around the world.

2015 Santa Trains a Hit with Children and Adults

What better way to kick off the Christmas season than a train ride with Santa?


Dec. 5 proved to be an exciting day for passengers of the Raleigh and Charlotte Santa Trains. The children enjoyed speaking personally to Santa about their Christmas wish lists, and getting their orders in early.

The biggest surprise of the day was for a group of college students from Australia, who had no idea they would be running into Santa at the Raleigh Amtrak Station.

Special thanks to the NC Train Host Association volunteers for helping Rail Division and Amtrak staff to make this day a success, both on the trains and at the stations. And last but not least, thanks to Santa and Mrs. Claus for sharing the spirit of Christmas with us all.



Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – *Oct. 2015 vs. 2014

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	16,246	17,083	-17%	\$301,258	\$356,403	-15%
Carolinian	27,414	28,240	-3%	\$1,521,290	\$1,548,987	-2%

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Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in October, supporting North Carolina's Amtrak onboard trains and at events.

*October 2015 service modifications and annulments impacted six Piedmont trains and two Carolinian trains. On Oct. 3, all Piedmont and Carolinian trains were annulled due to severe rains and flooding. In addition, on Oct. 12, Piedmont Trains 74 and 75 were annulled for PIP project track work. In Oct. 2014, two Piedmont trains were annulled. Additional disruptions for PIP project work are expected through December 2015. Average gasoline prices were \$2.26/gallon in Oct. 2015 vs. \$3.40/gallon in Oct. 2014 (EIA Weekly Retail Gasoline for Lower Atlantic region), and are expected to continue to fall. The State Fair drew 3,947 ons/off, a nearly 24% increase from 2014, and the Lexington BBQ Fest drew 709 ons/off, a 10% increase from the previous year; both are record ridership.



Piedmont Service a Star in Peter King's Sports Illustrated Monday Morning Quarterback via Guest Note from Washington Post's Liz Clarke *(Reprinted with permission from Liz Clarke.)*

A very cool travel note, a piece of Americana I never knew existed, from the Washington Post's Liz Clarke. She took Amtrak from her family's home in Raleigh, N.C., to Charlotte last weekend to cover Washington's game at Carolina, departing Raleigh at 7 a.m. and arriving in Panther town at 10:10 a.m. (And if you know the professional and uber-polite Liz Clarke, you can hear her voice here):

"I take Amtrak frequently for work, traveling from DC's Union Station to Philly or New York most often to cover games. But the vibe and experience on the Raleigh-to-Charlotte train is totally different—almost like a field trip.

"Everyone was in a great mood; so many families and fans wearing Panther jerseys. All the kids were so excited to be going to the game. And the conductors, as well as the woman who organized the crowd before boarding, were so friendly and eager to make sure everyone knew exactly what to expect and what to do to get to the game on time and back to Raleigh afterward. Around 6:45 a.m. the announcements started in the terminal and platform that "no personal alcohol" was permitted on the train. Once on board, people started digging into their backpacks and coolers and pulling out chicken biscuits, pimento cheese crackers and sweet tea for the families. And the conductor said to the passengers, with great verve:

'Are you ready for some football?'

"Not everyone was going to the game; the train stopped often—at places like Burlington, Greensboro, Salisbury and

Kannapolis—and a few people got off, while other Panther-bound fans joined the train. As we got closer to Charlotte, the conductor handed out an elaborate map and made a little speech, explaining that once at the Charlotte station, you could hop on a bus to downtown for \$2.20 or take a taxi. The map showed how to walk to Bank of America Stadium from the bus stop. Then the conductor

explained that there was only one train going back to Raleigh afterward, so everyone needed to be sure they got back to the station in time. He made a special point to tell the children they'd have listen to their parents and not dawdle and miss the train. He was more chaperone than conductor, very doting and dear.

"The whole thing was adorable. Everyone around me was in a great mood (of course the Panthers were then 9-0; and 10-0 by afternoon). But all were so happy to be setting off on this adventure, and everyone who worked for the train was so concerned that they have a good time and get there with plenty of time to spare.

"As for why I did it, there were two reasons. The main one: My dad, who is 87, lives in Raleigh, and I don't see him often enough. The other reason goes back nearly 25 years, to when I was hired by the Charlotte Observer to cover the city's quest to get an NFL expansion team. It was a fascinating, difficult process to cover (directed by the young Roger Goodell, a staffer under Paul Tagliabue), with 11 cities vying for two expansion teams. If you recall, Charlotte's case rested heavily on the shrewd marketing plan designed by Max Muhleman. Central to Muhleman's pitch to NFL owners was that a Charlotte expansion NFL team would

draw fans from a 150-mile radius. He actually had a point; while clever marketing, it was also true. The Panthers are a regional team, and the Raleigh-



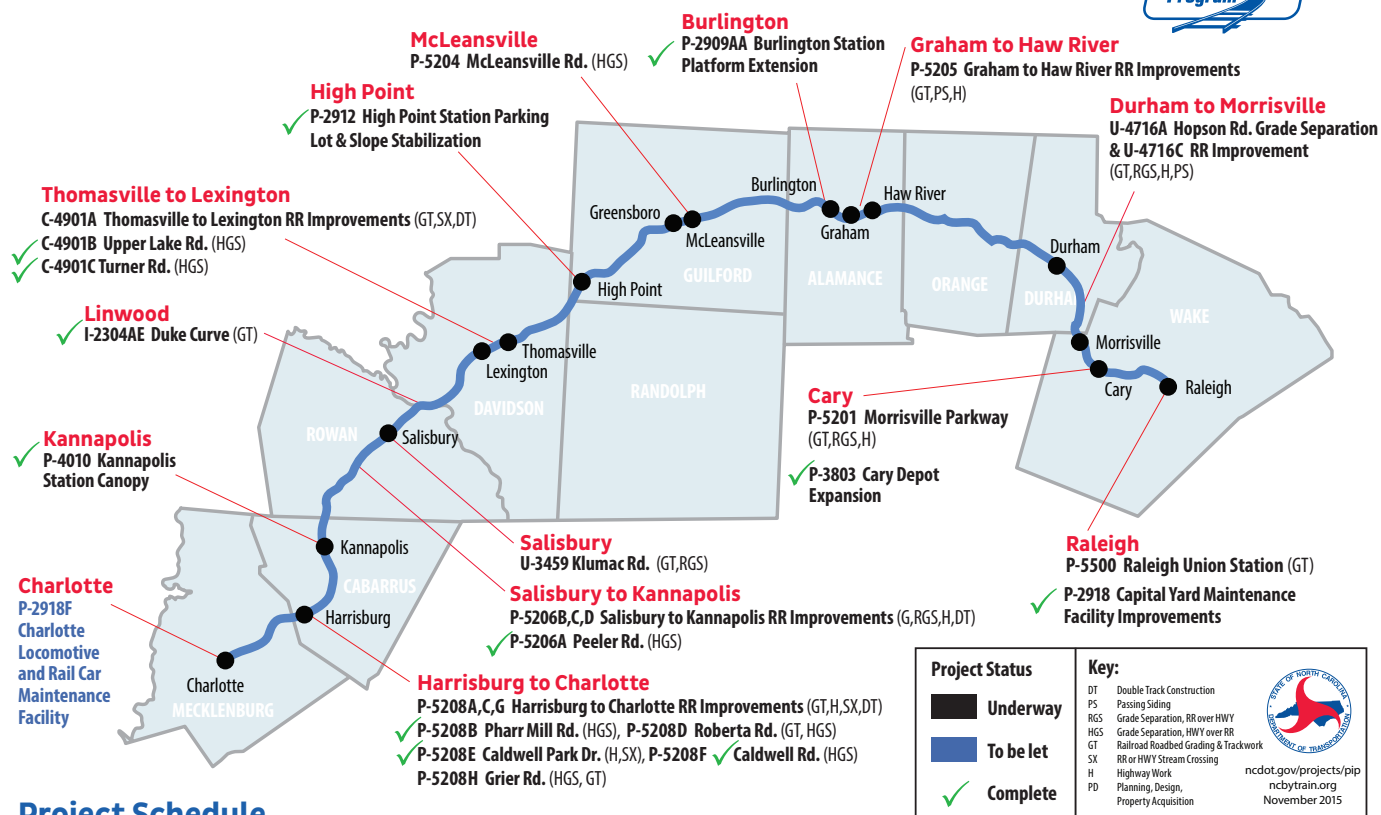
Liz Clarke ✓
@lizclarktweet

Follow

With thanks to dear friend @SI_PeterKing for letting me write a love note to a train on this week's MMQB!

Charlotte 'game-day' train was added expressly because of the Panthers. Two decades later, I finally took the train from Raleigh to Charlotte. It was all Max predicted and promised so many years ago—transporting Panthers fans from 150 miles away—and great fun. Better still, it enabled me to visit my dad on a game weekend." *Now that's a heck of a travel note right there. Thanks, Liz.*

Piedmont Improvement Program – November 2015 Status Report



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 11/30/2015)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$48,733,617
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$27,710,949
Stations & Facilities	\$41,032,982
Track & Structures	\$233,117,087
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$352,775,011

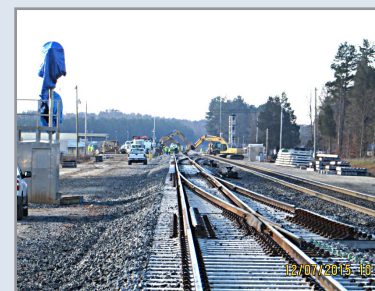
Six new contracts totaling \$43,910 were awarded in November.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 11/30/2015)

Current Commitments		\$471M
Pending Commitments		Anticipated Date
	Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	3/16
	PIDS Construction	1/16
	PD&A	Through '16
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP Milestones

Salisbury – On Dec. 7, the track detour was removed at new CP Sumner and rail traffic now runs over two completed No. 24 turnouts. Removing the detour allows the two remaining No. 24 turnouts to be constructed and the control point completed.



Morrisville – Track

construction has begun on the Morrisville Parkway Grade Separation project. Approximately 1.5 miles of new track is being constructed on improved alignment over the new bridge. The track is anticipated to be cut-in as the new main track in March 2016.

Rocky Mount (Congestion Mitigation) – New powered double crossovers at CP Armstrong just north of Rocky Mount on the CSX A-line went into service on Nov. 14. Installation of the crossovers allows more flexibility and capacity on the existing double track route by allowing trains to freely move between tracks in either direction.

Piedmont Improvement Program and Congestion Mitigation Project Photos

Nov. 2015



Congestion Mitigation Project, CP Armstrong signals



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, track construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, new alignment



P-5204 McLeansville Road Bridge Construction



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, Rich Fork Creek bridge construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos

Nov. 2015



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, Kimball Road bridge construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, industrial track construction



P-5208A Haydock to Junker, Mallard Creek bridge construction



P-5208A Haydock to Junker, Coddle Creek bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Grier Road bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, arch culvert construction